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ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
OFFICIAL CONDUCT

Washington, DC 20515-6328

July 19, 2001

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The Honorable Bob Barr
U.S. House of Representatives
1207 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Colleague:

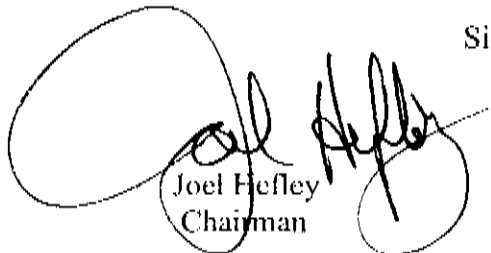
This responds to your July 13, 2001, letter to the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct requesting that the Committee begin an inquiry regarding Representative Gary Condit. For the reasons set forth below, we defer action on the matter about which you have written to the Committee.

We note, initially, that your letter does not appear to meet the specific requirements of a complaint as described in Rule 16 of the Committee's Rules.


Regardless, however, of whether your letter meets the formal requirements of a complaint under Committee Rules, we note that paragraph (f) of Rule 16 provides that the "Committee may defer action on a complaint against a Member . . . of the House of Representatives when the complaint alleges conduct that the Committee has reason to believe is being reviewed by appropriate law enforcement or regulatory authorities" This rule reflects the Committee's longstanding policy that it "will not, as a rule, take action on a complaint of a statutory violation by a Member while the authorities charged with the statute's enforcement are pursuing the case." *House Ethics Manual*, 1992, p. 16. You recognize in your letter that "the Committee would not take any action that would impede or interfere with the law enforcement investigation."

In your letter to the Committee you state that there is "evidence" that Representative Condit "has obstructed a law enforcement investigation." Based on public accounts it appears that relevant law enforcement entities are reviewing the allegations of obstruction about which you have written to the Committee. Therefore, under the circumstances presented here and in light of the rule and policy cited above, we have determined that it is appropriate for the Committee to defer action in this matter. This response should not be taken as any indication of the Committee's position on the merit, or lack thereof, of the allegations contained in your letter.

Sincerely,



Joel Hefley
Chairman



Howard L. Berman
Ranking Minority Member